

CLASS X
A LETTER TO GOD

G.L. FUENTES

VALUE POINTS

- Lencho, a simple honest and hardworking farmer, had grown corn on his farm. He was expecting a bumper harvest if the farm received enough rain. He worked like an ox in his field and had a good knowledge of farming which made him know that the field needed rain to give a good yield.
- His house is the only one in the valley and he has no neighbours and friends.
- Lencho was so happy to see the rain clouds that he stepped out of his house to feel the rain. He went back to the house convinced that he would have a bountiful harvest.
- He is a caring head of the family and felt sad as well as worried that his family would go hungry that year.
- Lencho is entirely dependent on beneficent(helpful) rain for the nourishment of his crops and sustenance of his family.
- Lencho's happiness on seeing the rain soon turned to sadness when the hail storm destroyed his crop. He sought God's intervention to give him money to sow the crop again. He writes a letter to God describing his predicament (difficult situation) and the help he required.
- Lencho's only hope was God. His profound (great) and unwavering (unshakeable) faith in God can be seen from the fact that he did not think of asking for help from any human. Neither did he think it strange to write a letter to God nor was he surprised to see the money.
- The postal employees initially take the letter as a joke.
- The postmaster is a kind, generous, helpful, amiable and a God-fearing man. Once he reads Lencho's letter, he wants to help Lencho so that Lencho's faith in God is not broken.
- The postmaster knows that he cannot send the letter to God.
- He gave a part of his salary, asked other employees to help and also requested his friends to contribute for this noble cause.

- Proud of the good deed and curious to see Lencho's reaction to the money from 'God', the postmaster and his staff watch the simple peasant's reaction to their gift.
- Lencho's surprise turns from triumph to disbelief to disappointment to outrage (anger) as he counts the money.
- The end of the story is ironic as the postmaster's act of goodness, kindness and charity is not appreciated by Lencho. The simple farmer could not fathom (understand) that it is some unknown benefactor who has sent him money and not God. He called the post office staff "a bunch of crooks".
- Lencho could not appreciate the kind gesture of his fellow human beings and the help he has received. The people Lencho distrusted, were the very people who had collected the money he had asked from God. Both the postmaster and Lencho are God fearing but the postmaster is empathetic while Lencho is doubtful of the post office employees
- The story presents a conflict between humans and humans together with conflict between nature and humans.
- The readers feel at the end that Lencho would have been angry at God for not fully granting his request, he is actually angry at his fellow men for stealing the money sent by God. Fuentes reaffirms that Lencho has incredible faith in God.
- An ox is strong, loyal but a slow-witted animal.
- God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient.
- Sought is past tense of seek.
- Learn the difference between an optimist and a pessimist

- The only thing the earth needed was a _____.
 - How much money did Lencho ask from God? How much did he receive?
 - Which crop did Lencho grow?
 - Who all contributed towards 70 pesos collected by the postmaster?
 - What weather was Lencho hoping for? What did he get?
 - From which direction was Lencho expecting the rain?
 - Why did Lencho write a letter to God?
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- “With a satisfied expression, he regarded the field of ripe corn with flowers, draped in a curtain of rain. But suddenly a strong wind began to blow”
 - Who does the word “he” refer to?
 - Name the author of the lesson.
 - Why was he ‘satisfied’?
 - What happened when the strong wind began to blow?
 - What effect did this weather phenomenon have on the crop?
 - It’s really getting bad now
 - Who is the speaker of the words?
 - What is getting ‘bad’? How long did the hailstorm last?
 - What happened after this?
 - What thought was in the hearts of those who lived in the solitary house?
 - What did Lencho write in his first letter addressed to God?

- Why was the postmaster surprised? Why did he decide to reply to Lencho as God?
- List 2 adjectives used by the author to describe the postmaster?
- “Lencho showed not the slightest surprise”.
- Give two reasons why Lencho got angry after counting the money?
- Why is the end of the story ironic?
- The postmaster expected happiness on Lencho’s face and may be expected gratitude and heartfelt thanks to God. But he read the letter by Lencho which addressed all the post office employees as a bunch of crooks. Instead of gratitude, the postmaster got brickbats.
- Comment on the character of Lencho as reflected by his attitude towards the post office employees?
- The story presents a conflict between humans. Lencho is incorrect in his assessment of the employees and had a negative attitude towards mankind and no faith in men. Not a fair judge of man’s nature. Did not have a sense of humility, appreciation and gratitude.
- What did Lencho write to God, the first time?

Lencho wrote to God that without God’s help his family would go hungry that year. He also wrote that he needed a hundred pesos in order to sow his field again. And to live until the next crop as the hailstorm had destroyed his corn crop.

- What letter did Lencho write the second time?
- Lencho requested God to send him thirty pesos as he had received only seventy pesos instead of the hundred pesos he had asked for. Lencho also requested God not to send the money through the mail as the post office employees were a bunch of crooks.

What did Lencho hope for?

Lencho hoped for good rainfall so that his parched land can give a bountiful and bumper harvest.

Why did Lencho say that the raindrops were like new coins?

The raindrops were very precious for the thirsty land which would give a bumper harvest and result in prosperity for Lencho.

How did the rain change? What happened to Lencho's fields?

Lencho was very satisfied with the rain but suddenly the weather turned inclement and a strong wind began to blow. Along with the rain hailstones too came down from the sky. After an hour when the hailstorm had passed, Lencho's cornfield was completely destroyed.

What were Lencho's feelings when the hail stopped?

Lencho's happiness turned to sadness and he was disappointed. All his hardwork lay waste. He stared at a bleak future at the loss of his crop as he did not have seed to plant in the field.

Who or what did Lencho have faith in? What did he do?

Lencho had profound and unwavering faith in God. He wrote a letter to God asking God to provide him with a hundred pesos so that he could sow his field again.

What did the postmaster do then?

After reading Lencho's letter, the postmaster knew that he could not send the letter to God and he must do something to help so that Lencho's faith in God is not broken. He was a kind, generous, helpful and empathetic man and asked for contribution from the employees, requested his friends to help and also donated a part of his salary to raise a hundred pesos. But he could collect only seventy pesos.

Was Lencho surprised to find a letter for him with money in it?

No, Lencho was not surprised to find a letter for him with money in it because he had a profound and unwavering faith in God. He believed that God would not deny his request and would definitely help him.

What made him angry?

When Lencho counted the money, he became angry as there were only seventy pesos instead of the hundred that he had asked for. So, he wrote another letter to God.

Why does the postmaster send money to Lencho? Why does he sign the letter “God”?

The postmaster was a kind, empathetic, generous and a God-fearing person. He was deeply impressed by Lencho’s faith in God and did not want his faith to be shaken or broken. So, he decided to help Lencho but he knew that he alone would not be able to help Lencho. He requests his friends and employees to help him raise a hundred pesos and contribute to this noble cause.

He was a humble man and did not want to take the credit and also wanted Lencho to believe that God had helped him.

Did Lencho try to find out who had sent the money to him? Why/ Why not?

No, Lencho did not try to find out who had sent the money to him because he had complete faith in God’s kindness and compassion. He knew that God would not deny his request. Moreover, he had a negative attitude towards his fellow human beings and had no faith in men.

Who does Lencho think has taken the rest of the money? What is the irony in the situation?

Lencho thought that the post office employees had taken the rest of the money. The irony of the situation is that the people who helped him were considered to be crooks by Lencho. The postmaster’s act of goodness, kindness and charity was not appreciated by Lencho.

There are two kinds of conflict in the story between humans and nature and between humans themselves.

The conflict between humans and nature is portrayed by the destruction of Lencho’s corn crop. He was expecting rain in order to get a bumper harvest but a hailstorm completely destroyed Lencho’s standing crop. Lencho’s happiness turned into sadness and disappointment. The conflict between human themselves is shown when Lencho did not appreciate the postmaster’s kind and generous act. It was in fact the postmaster who had collected the money for Lencho. Even though the postmaster performed a good deed, Lencho called the post office employees a bunch of crooks. Lencho had a

negative attitude towards mankind and no faith in men. He wasn't a fair judge of man's nature which made the ending ironic.

DUST OF SNOW

ROBERT FROST

Themes

- ❖ Nature has healing power and helps curb the negative emotions which arise in a person. Whenever a person is sorrowful or feels hopeless, nature provides (gives) relief
- ❖ Small, insignificant natural events can sometimes have a great impact on us.
- ❖ Man should never break contact and communication with mother nature as it gives us peace and harmony.

VALUE POINTS

- ✓ The speaker was standing under the poisonous hemlock tree and a dust of snow accidentally falls on him. A crow, which is a bird of ill omen, had gently dropped that snow on him.
- ✓ The beautiful, pure, white snow is dropped by a crow sitting on a hemlock tree. This shows that nature constantly maintains contact with us and heals us. This also tells us that good and bad co-exist in nature and we should concentrate on the good part of life and not dwell on the

negative aspects. We should remove regret and sorrow from our lives and look only at the bright future in front of us.

- ✓ The speaker was in an unpleasant mood earlier but the gentle shower of snow uplifted his mood and turned his unhappy day into a happy one.
- ✓ A winter day which was wasted up till that time as he was unappreciative of life and nature ends on a good note once the snow falls on the poet.
- ✓ The poem is ironical because the agent of change of mood, positive transformation and optimism is a bird which is associated with ill-omen. Also, the hemlock tree is a poisonous one which is useless for humans. Maybe these two objects want the poet to focus on the present, leave his unhappy mood so that he can appreciate the beauty of nature and life.
- ✓ The two crucial words are rued and saved. The regretful day was saved by a bird which is a harbinger (messenger) of doom and fear.

SUMMARY

The poet is upset, gripped with hopelessness and standing under a hemlock tree on a winter day. Suddenly a crow sitting on the tree shakes the tree and the fine particles of snow fall on the poet due to the action of the crow. The soft and cold shower of snow transforms the poet's mood from being sad (in despair) to happy. He starts feeling healed and refreshed. This simple shower of snow saves his day from being wasted as he has received this unexpected gift from nature.

LITERARY DEVICES

- ✓ Rhyme scheme abab
- ✓ Alliteration – Has given my heart, saved some

How does Robert Frost present nature in the poem “Dust of Snow”?

Nature has been presented in an unconventional manner in the poem. The choice of crow is strange as it is a scavenger bird which is associated with dark and foreboding events or omens. Generally, poets use nightingales, doves, peacocks etc. Similarly, the hemlock tree is a poisonous tree whereas the other trees like the oak represent stability, strength, beauty and resilience. The use of crow and hemlock represent sorrow, fear and death. Frost uses the crow and the hemlock to represent his unhappy state of mind

before the dust of snow fell on him. The dust of snow represents joy and a change of mood. Hence, even a crow can bring joy in certain exceptional circumstances. The poet's feelings of loss and regret were replaced by hope and cheerfulness. (Can also add points from point 2 of value points)

Why was the poet standing under the hemlock tree?

The poet was feeling very sorrowful, depressed and suffered from hopelessness on that day. As he was lost in his thoughts, he happened to stand under the hemlock tree. He did not have any prior plan to stand under the hemlock tree.

FIRE AND ICE

Robert Frost

- Frost wrote this poem just after World War I. Hence, he was greatly impacted by its destruction and is cautioning man to stay away from both fire and ice.
- Fire and Ice by Robert Frost is a short and symbolic poem which conveys a simple theme about human behaviour and its aspects of hatred and obsession..
- The poet begins the poem by saying that either fire or ice will (catastrophically) end this world. These are the two ways by which world can come to an end. The cause of this beautiful world's destruction will be humans. Frost gives us no other possibilities which will lead to an end of this world. We are also unclear whether fire or ice will eventually destroy the world but these two are the only options available.
- The poet feels that "fire" or "desire" makes people greedy, materialistic and deceitful. The desire for power led to the deadliest wars, battles in

human history which killed many humans and other living things. Too much fire can also destroy a relationship.

- The world does not refer to the earth. The poem tells us how life should be lived. The word “world” refers to a person’s life as well as human civilization.
- The poem tells us the importance of balance and moderation in life. If human emotions are not reined in (controlled), a person can be mentally and physically destroyed, countries can be destroyed and even human civilization may come to an end.
- According to the poet, fire means the human emotion of desire for accumulation of material things, anger, violence, greed etc.
- “From what I’ve tasted of desire- Unhealthy obsession (fire) can lead to destruction of a productive quality of life. Frost says that he has tasted desire and knows how detrimental (harmful) it can be. Obsession like fire can consume a person and lead to ruin of a person.
- I hold with those who favour fire.” - The poet says that if he draws lessons from his personal experience, then he feels that the world will come to an end from the ill- effects of emotions of fire.

- “Ice” means coldness that emerges in humans when they only desire a materialistic life. With the emergence of materialistic thoughts, the emotions like kindness and empathy and human warmth vanish and are replaced with cold indifference and hatred. In the race for accumulation of worldly possessions, people forget compassion and empathy for other humans and prefer material things more.
- While fire and ice are different, but their outcome(result) is the same. If human emotions are not kept on leash and they remain unchecked, then they can destroy the world.
- In nature fire and ice cannot exist together, but for the poet desire(fire) is what leads to coldness or hatred (ice) and indifference for the problems of fellow human beings. Hence both will co- exist to destroy the world in future.
- In the initial two lines Frost says that either the world will be destroyed by fire or by Ice. But he finally concludes that both of these are equally

dangerous and both will successfully lead the world towards destruction.

- It is a nine-line poem with the rhyme scheme aba abc bcb.

Meanings-

Desire- Desire or passion is considered a hot emotion hence the association with the word fire.

In Frost's poem, "Fire and Ice," what do 'fire' and 'ice' together represent?

- a) Virtues
- b) Agents of destruction
- c) Salvation
- d) War

What is the implied theme or moral in the poem?

- a) Love one another
- b) Destroy others

LONG WALK TO FREEDOM

NELSON MANDELA

Q1 Which twin obligations does Mandela talk about? How can one fulfil these obligations?

Mandela talks about twin obligations that is obligations to his family, parents, wife and children. The second obligation is to his people, community and nation. In a civil society, each one of us should fulfil these obligations. It is

the responsibility of the government to provide an atmosphere where a person can fulfil these obligations. But in a country like South Africa, it was not possible to fulfil these obligations because of discrimination. It was an era of oppression and torture and the native Africans were not allowed even the basic freedom of living a dignified life. Mandela was pained to see that Africans were denied basic freedoms in their own motherland by the conquerors. Hence, he fulfilled these twin obligations by struggling against the white rule. He transformed his hunger for freedom to the greater hunger for freedom of his people.

Q2. What does courage mean to Mandela?

Courage means to risk and give one's life for an idea. It is to stand up to attacks and torture without breaking and to show strength and resilience that are unimaginable to ordinary people. Courage is also the triumph over fear. Mandela learnt the meaning of courage when he saw the cruel behaviour of Whites towards native Africans. His fellow patriots' sacrifice of their lives for an idea made Mandela learn the meaning of courage.

Q3. Why was 10th of May 1994 a red-letter day in the history of South Africa?

10th of May 1994 was a letter day in the history of South Africa as the hated regime of apartheid came to an end and the country elected its first Black President Mr. Nelson Mandela. Many foreign heads of state attended this momentous and landmark ceremony when SA elected its first democratic non-racial government.

Q5. At the beginning of his speech, Mandela mentions "an extraordinary human disaster". What does Mandela mean by this?

The extraordinary human disaster was the despised policy of apartheid or discrimination followed by the colonial masters. The fair-skinned masters treated the dark-skinned native Africans in harsh, inhumane manner. They hardly had any rights and were made slaves in their own land by the aggressors. The Africans could not take part in the political process to decide the fate of their own people. Rather they had to face atrocities inflicted by the colonial masters.

Q6. What is the “glorious Human achievement” he speaks of at the end?

The glorious achievement is the formation of rainbow nation where all peoples (people of different races) will be equal, have the same rights irrespective of their skin colour. The hated policy of apartheid had been replaced by liberty, justice, peace and restoration of human dignity. It was also the installation of South Africa’s first freely and fairly elected democratic, non-racial government with an African as its first President.

Q7. Why does Mandela thank the international leaders?

Mandela thanked the international leaders for being a part of history at the swearing-in of the elected Government. Together with the South Africans, they will lay the foundation of a new apartheid free, democratic South Africa based on equality. The support of the nations of the world will help the new nation to take the long walk to freedom.

Q8. “We, who were outlaws not so long ago, have today been given the rare privilege to be host to the nations of the world on our own soil”

Who does the word we refer to?

The native South Africans.

Why were they outlaws?

Many countries of the world had broken diplomatic relations with South Africa due to the practice of Apartheid.

What is the rare privilege that the speaker is referring to?

It is a rare privilege as the power to lead the nation is in the hands of native Africans now. From being powerless to decide their fate and the fate of their country, now they could steer the nation towards an equitable society.

Q9. "I was not unmindful of the fact that not so many years before they would not have saluted but arrested me"

Name the speaker of the above lines.

Who does the word 'they' refer to?

Why would they have arrested the speaker some years earlier?

The military would have arrested Mandela as he fought against the White Government which did not give freedom and equal rights to the native Africans. Mandela was a threat to the Government as he was the leader of the resistance movement against the Whites.

Why did the military salute him now?

The military saluted Mandela as he was the President of the nation now. The military also pledged its loyalty to a non-racial, democratic Government.

Q10. What are Mandela's views on freedom?

Even as a child, Mandela knew that he was born free and as long as he obeyed his father and abided by the customs of his tribe, no one could curtail his freedom. Mandela desired freedom as he realized that his boyhood

freedom was an illusion and he was no longer free. Once he joined the ANC, his hunger for his own freedom turned into the hunger for freedom of his people. He wanted the native Africans to live their lives with dignity and self-respect. The chains of his people were like chains on him. He desired to break these chains of bondage.

Q11. What does Mandela say about the oppressor?

Mandela says that the oppressor is a prisoner of hate and needs to be liberated from the bars of prejudice and narrow mindedness. An oppressor needs to be liberated as he is taking away someone else's freedom. Neither is the oppressor truly free nor the person from whom freedom has been taken away. Whenever injustice takes place, both the oppressed and the oppressor lose their humanity.

Q12. What made Nelson Mandela join the ANC? What transformation did it bring in his life?

Nelson Mandela joined the ANC once he realized that his boyhood freedom was an illusion and all Africans were not free in their native land. As he was the son of the chief of his tribe, he knew that he had to lead his people to overthrow the white aggressors and attain freedom for his people.

From being a person concerned with his personal freedoms, he realized that he had to fight for the freedoms of his entire race. From a frightened young man, he became a bold person and from a law-abiding attorney he turned into a rebel who fought for the cause of his people. He knew that freedom was indivisible and he did not want to enjoy the poor and limited freedoms he was granted till all his people had complete freedom dignity and respect.

Q13. Why was Mandela overwhelmed with a sense of history, on the day of the inauguration?

Mandela was a visionary with indomitable spirit who showed the world the true meaning of forgiveness. He remembered how after the bitter Anglo-Boer War the white skinned people overcame their differences and united to subjugate the native Africans through a system of racial discrimination. The structure of apartheid was one of the harshest and the most inhumane in the history of the world. But Mandela was happy that the day of inauguration marked the end of that system. From that day onwards, the rights and freedoms of all South Africans were guaranteed by law regardless of the skin of their colour.

Q14. What did freedom mean to Mandela as a child?

Freedom for Mandela as a child was the freedom to run in the fields near his mother's hut, freedom to swim in the clear stream that ran through his village, to roast mealies under the stars and to ride the broad backs of slow-moving bulls.

Q15. Which two promises does Mandela make to his people in the course of his speech?

During the inauguration ceremony, Mandela pledged to uphold and obey the constitution. Mandela also promises that he and his Government would erase poverty, suffering, deprivation gender and other discrimination by

working for the well-being of the people. He also promises to end oppression of one by another which will ensure freedom and justice for all.

Q16. How did Mandela's views about freedom change as he grew from boyhood to adulthood?

A 14 + A10

Q17. Why did the South Africans sing two national anthems?

The South Africans sang two national anthems to show their acceptance and the act of forgiveness of the native Africans towards the White oppressors. It was also a promise that the native Africans will not avenge the wrongs of the past. Keeping aside the historical wrongs, the two races will move towards a new future based on equality, built with joint effort.

Q18. Why does Mandela say that he could not thank the African patriots enough, who died during the struggle?

South Africa gained independence due to the sacrifice of the patriots who gave up their lives for the country. But for their sacrifice and struggle, apartheid which created a deep and lasting wound in the country, would have continued forever. It was due to extreme oppression that these patriots achieved heights of character and were the true wealth of the nation. Hence, Mandela wants to thank them for their sacrifice and to have taught him the meaning of courage.

Q19. How did Apartheid impact South Africa?

Apartheid created a deep and lasting wound in the country as the dominant whites had unleashed a reign of brutality and oppression on the native Africans.

Q20. "My country is rich in the minerals and gems that lie beneath its soil, but I have always known that its greatest wealth is its people, finer and truer than the purest diamonds. It is from these comrades in the struggle that I learned the meaning of courage."

- a) Who is the speaker of the above lines?
- b) Which struggle does he refer to?
- c) Name any two comrades that the speaker refers to.
- d) What creates heights of character as told by the speaker?

Q 21. Mandela's says that 'Man's goodness is a flame that can be hidden but never extinguished'?

Mandela felt that no man is born hating another man because of the colour of his skin, his background or his religion. People can be taught to both love and hate. Love comes naturally to human heart than hate. So it is easy to make people fall in love with fellow human beings. While in prison, he saw this glimmer of love and humanity in the prison guards and that reassured him that they would be able to gain their freedom.

Q21. Describe the hardships faced by Mandela.

Mandela faced many hardships and suffered much to get freedom for his fellow countrymen from the oppressive White rule. His political beliefs turned him into a criminal from a law-abiding attorney. He was punished and jailed for many years which made him lose contact with his family members. He and his comrades were brutally tortured and oppressed yet they kept the idea of freedom alive in their hearts. Their sacrifice bore fruit once Africans earned equal rights in their country and took part in the political process.

Q22. Why was Mandela pained on the day of the inauguration?

On becoming the President, Mandela was pained as he could not thank the African patriots who had sacrificed their lives for an equitable society in South Africa. Secondly, these patriots like Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo were not alive to see that their sacrifices had wrought a society that recognized the rights and freedoms of all peoples regardless of the colour of their skin.

A TIGER IN THE ZOO

Leslie Norris

- ✓ Through this poem, the poet has tried to expose the miserable life of the tigers caged in the zoo. He has contrasted the life of a tiger in the zoo to his free life in the wild. The tiger hunts for survival but humans have captured it for fun and amusement.
- ✓ The ferocious, regal tiger is born to rule in the jungle and roam freely in its natural habitat. This brave predator is feared by both humans and animals when it is in the jungle. In the jungle, there is no restriction to his movement and because of his excellent camouflage he can kill plump deer when they come near the watering hole. But in the zoo, he is in a pitiful state as he is no longer free as he is in the jungle. Human beings subjugate (tame) the majestic tiger by imprisoning it in a cage.
- ✓ The poet expresses deep sympathy at the pitiful state of the tiger confined to the limited space of the cage. His plight evokes pity as he has no place to even move in the cage. The tiger feels cramped in his concrete cell and can barely take a few steps in his cage. The tiger's rage is quiet because he is helpless in captivity.
- ✓ The poet says that had the tiger been in the jungle, then it would have hidden in the long grass to kill the plump(fat) deer near the water hole. He would travel to the edge of the villages to terrify the villagers by his snarling and baring of his fangs (teeth) and claws. This shows the human-animal conflict. The tiger does not want the villagers to invade his territory.
- ✓ Human beings have slowly encroached upon the tiger's habitat leading to human- animal conflict. The tiger terrorizes the villagers by snarling

around their houses and frightens them by baring its fangs and claws. Maybe he does this to re-establish his authority over his territory.

- ✓ This suppressed anger can also be due to the fact that he can't break the concrete cell and his strength has been diminished (reduced) because of the concrete cell and the bars.
- ✓ The bars of the cage have imprisoned this magnificent animal and he has been reduced to become a piece of entertainment for the visitors.
- ✓ The tiger in the cage has no rest during the day or night. During the day, the visitors trouble him and at night the siren of the patrolling cars disturb him.
- ✓ The vastness of the brilliant starry sky and the confined space of his cage intensifies the loss of his freedom. Perhaps he waits for the day when he would be let out. Example of irony. The poet highlights the contrast of freedom and captivity.

CONFLICT BETWEEN FREEDOM AND CAPTIVITY

- ✓ Love for freedom is the natural instinct of every living being. No one likes to live in confinement. Wild animals are meant to live in the jungles or protected areas and not in cages.
- ✓ Similarly, the tiger also longs for freedom. He is so unhappy in his cage that he even ignores the visitors. His quiet rage can be seen in the way he walks in the small cage. He wants to escape from this captivity as his strength is diminished and he is no longer free.
- ✓ God has made all living beings equal and animals too have the right to freedom. Zoos where animals are kept in cages are not good for animals. In fact, it is cruelty towards these animals. They have a right to live in their natural habitat and run freely. Humans should learn to respect the freedom of animals.

LITERARY DEVICES

- ✓ Alliteration- concrete cell, behind bars, plump pass.
- ✓ Repetition- velvet quiet and quiet rage (velvet quiet refers to soundlessness of tiger's stalking of prey whereas quiet rage refers to seething (controlled) anger.
- ✓ Brilliant stars and brilliant eyes-. Two contrasting images have been portrayed by the poet.
- ✓ Pads of velvet- metaphor

- ✓ Quiet rage- oxymoron
- ✓ Rhyme scheme abcb
- ✓ Note: Singular and plural of deer is deer.

HIS FIRST FLIGHT

LIAM O' FLAHERTY

How did the seagull's mother encourage and tempt him to fly?

The hungry seagull had plaintively called out to his mother to give him some food as his father and siblings were not paying any attention to him. His mother picked up a piece of fish and flew near him but remained slightly away from the ledge. He dived at the fish as he was starving and he fell headlong into space as he had left the security of the ledge. Fear gripped him but very soon his survival instinct overtook him and made him flap his wings and soar in the sky. From a coward and fearful seagull, he became a confident bird as he knew that his family will always support him.

How many siblings did the seagull have?

The young seagull had two brothers and a sister.

Whose wings were longer- the seagull's or his siblings'?

The seagull's wings were longer than his siblings.

What did the seagull see his parents teach his siblings?

The seagull saw his parents teach his siblings to skim waves, to dive for fish and to perfect the art of flight.

What did his older brother do which made the adult seagulls proud?

The older seagull had caught his first herring and this independent feeding made his parents feel proud of him.

What sight maddened the young seagull?

The sight of food maddened him as the seagull had not eaten for a day and the blazing sun was heating up the ledge. Also, the indifference of his family hurt him.

How did his parents initially motivate and cajole him to fly?

The seagull's parents were successful in teaching his siblings to feed independently and fly. They wanted to make him independent too. So, they initially called out to him shrilly, upbraided him and threatened to let him starve on the ledge unless he attempted to fly and leave the security of the ledge.

How was the seagull different from his siblings?

The seagull was different from his siblings as he was cowardly, fearful and did not wish to fly. He was not only under confident that his wings won't support him, he was also scared of the sea which was miles below the ledge. His siblings had taunted him for his cowardice and later on paid no attention to the fact that he had not eaten for a day. On the other hand, his siblings were quick to learn how to catch fish and also learnt to fly without any fear.

What is the message of this lesson?

Fear is a natural emotion faced by young and old alike. We can overcome fear by taking a decision, acting on it and having faith in our ability. Dealing with fear helps us to overcome the invisible threads which hold us from achieving our potential and that success is attained only with hard work. Our family always supports us during our troubled period and that the parents push their children to excel and become independent in life.

Why was the seagull afraid to fly?

The seagull was afraid to fly as he was certain that his wings were too weak to support him and he was frightened of the vast expanse of the sea. He did not have self-confidence that his wings would be able to support his weight in flight.

Why did the seagull scream with fright once he landed on water?

The seagull alighted to stand on the sea water his legs sank in the water as the sea surface was not a hard surface.

Why did he relax subsequently?

The seagull tried to rise and fly but he was too tired and weak with hunger and had no energy to fly. Gradually, he realized that he was floating and not sinking in the sea water which made him relax and enjoy his

Write the word meanings

- a) Plaintively
- b) Muster
- c) Expanse
- d) Devour
- e) Brink
- f) Beckoning

BLACK AEROPLANE

FREDERICK FORSYTH

- ❖ The Dakota was a new aircraft. True or False
- ❖ Imp Fact- The Dakota aircraft was flying over France to England.

“Everything was going well. It was an easy flight”. What went wrong suddenly?

The narrator was looking at an easy flight over France to England as the weather was clear. As he switched over to his last fuel tank, he saw huge storm clouds and he had no option but to fly through the storm clouds. In the pitch dark, all of a sudden, all his navigation instruments including his compass and radio went dead. This put his life in peril as without fuel, radio and compass he could have easily crashed and died.

How far was Paris from where the aircraft was flying?

Paris was 150 kms behind him.

Why did he not return to Paris?

The pilot did not return to Paris because he wanted to meet his family soon and go on a holiday with them. He was willing to risk flying through the storm clouds to meet his family.

What was the pilot dreaming of, while flying the plane?

The pilot was dreaming of a holiday and was excited at the prospect of spending time with his family as well as to have a good, big English breakfast while flying to England.

Why was the black aeroplane going down?

The black aeroplane was going down as it had approached the nearest airport.

Why was the aeroplane twisting in the air?

The aeroplane was twisting in the air as it was being tossed inside the huge storm clouds and he had no control over his aircraft to steady it.

Where could the pilot not establish contact?

The pilot could not establish contact with the Paris Control room.

Why was the narrator frightened again?

The narrator felt fear to grip his heart when he realized that he had just enough fuel for another five or ten minutes of flight.

“I will take the risk.” What is the risk? Why does the pilot of the old Dakota take it?

The pilot was keen to meet his family and have a good English breakfast which made him disregard all safety measures and he entered the huge storm clouds in the old Dakota without knowing how to navigate through the clouds. His aircraft was on his last fuel tank and visibility was zero. His old aircraft could have met with an accident. Once inside the dark clouds, the aeroplane jumped and twisted in the air and all his instruments like radio and compass stopped working.

Why did it become impossible for the pilot of the Dakota to see anything?

When the pilot saw huge storm clouds in front of him on his way to England, he had no option but to enter the clouds as he was on his last fuel tank. The storm clouds were huge and black and had hidden the moonlight and the stars.

How did the black aeroplane rescue the first pilot?

The black aeroplane rescued the first pilot by navigating him through the dark storm clouds so that he could land safely without crashing even when all his instruments were dead, had less fuel and he was flying in zero visibility. On landing. He wanted to thank his benefactor but realized that there was no other aircraft which was flying in that inclement weather. Still, he was infinitely grateful for the help he had received.

What did the pilot of the Dakota see on the horizon which concerned him?

The pilot of the Dakota saw huge storm clouds ahead of him which caused him concern as he did not have enough fuel with him to go around the clouds or fly up above the storm clouds. He had no option but to fly into the clouds so that he could reach England safely.

Describe the sky when the Dakota was flying over France.

At one thirty in the morning, when the Dakota was flying over France, the sky was clear with no cloud in the sky. The stars were shining and the moon was rising behind the narrator as he flew his aeroplane towards England.

How did the narrator get out of the storm in the night to land safely? OR

Describe the flight of the Dakota airplane until it landed safely at the airport.

The narrator was flying in his old Dakota when he saw the black storm clouds. He entered the clouds as he was low on fuel and could not fly up or around them. Once inside, all his instruments went dead and his aircraft jumped and twisted in the air. Luckily, in those clouds, he saw a black aeroplane near him. The plane had no lights on its wings and its pilot instructed the narrator to follow him. The pilot followed him obediently and was able to land safely. This tells us that with courage, hope and self-confidence we can surmount(overcome) any daunting task. Fear has to be conquered in order to achieve success in life.

THE BALL POEM

JOHN BERRYMAN

- ❖ The poem talks about irreversible loss and the need to accept that loss.
- ❖ The lost ball symbolizes the link between the loss of the ball and a part of life that is lost which can be his childhood.
- ❖ When the ball is lost in the water, the boy stands rigid and trembling and is in shock. He also realizes that the ball has been lost due to his actions.
- ❖ The ball is unique and irreplaceable just like the life that he has lost. That is why there is no use thinking that there are other balls. Secondly, the boy has to learn to take responsibility of his belongings.
- ❖ Money is external means that money cannot buy happiness, peace and memories.
- ❖ Harbour may stand for memories of life.
- ❖ People will take balls and balls will be lost always means that one will lose or will have to give up things that one loves. Despite this, one will have to learn to stand up, be strong and get on with life no matter how much it hurts on the inside. That is the only way to survive and learn not to cling onto something that has been lost.
- ❖ Loss will help a person to appreciate achievements of life.
- ❖ World of possessions means the materialistic world.
- ❖ Epistemology of loss means that the feeling of loss will remain forever with a person. Learning to accept loss will help to pick up the broken pieces of heart/life and live in this world.
- ❖ The poet sympathises with the boy but refuses to buy him another ball so that he learns this valuable lesson of life.
- ❖ The poem has been written in blank verse.
- ❖ Alliteration- buys a ball back.

THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

VALUE POINTS

- ✓ It is an autobiographical account.
- ✓ Anne is given a diary on her birthday. She calls her diary Kitty. She fills the diary with details of her life and her classes at school. She finds solace (comfort) writing in her diary as she feels that she has difficulty opening up to her friends and has no true confidants.
- ✓ Anne records her perception (opinion) of herself, her family and teachers. Through her writing, Anne comes across as a playful girl but with mature thoughts. She seems to be optimistic about the future even during this unusual period of difficulty.
- ✓ Anne's perpetual feeling of being lonely and misunderstood provides the impetus for her dedicated diary writing. Anne expresses gratitude that the diary can act as a confidant with whom she can share her innermost thoughts.
- ✓ Anne is a warm and intelligent young girl who shares a close bond with her grandmother.
- ✓ She feels that teachers are unpredictable creatures as the teachers do not detain the academically weak students of the class even though some students need to repeat their year. Anne calls these weak students dummies and opines that a quarter of her class should be held back.

Why does Anne feel lonely even in the company of her friends and family?

Anne was a thirteen-year old girl who lived in a good home with loving parents, aunts and admiring friends. She also had an elder sister along with thirty other people whom she could call friends yet she did not have a true friend in whom she could confide or share a close bond with. While she was with her friends, she could only have a good time and talk about ordinary everyday things. She showed an outward appearance of a chatty and witty girl but she missed a friend whom she could call as her true friend. Despite

a loving family and a huge circle of friends, she was lonely which made her decide to make her diary Kitty as her best friend.

How did Anne get punished by Mr. Keesing for her talking?

Anne was a talkative child in school which made the Math teacher Mr. Keesing angry at her as she did not quit (stop) talking despite several warnings by him. One day, he punished her by assigning her an essay on the topic 'A Chatterbox'. Anne came up with a convincing argument to prove the necessity of talking and argued that talking was a student's trait and she would do her best to keep it under control. On the other hand, she would never be able to cure herself of this habit as her mother talked as much as her and Anne had no control over inherited traits. The second time she was punished, Anne wrote an essay on 'The Incurable Chatterbox'. As she did not quit her incessant chatter, Mr Keesing told her to write an essay on 'Quack, Quack, Quack said Mistress Chatterbox'. With the help of her friend Sanne, Anne submitted the entire essay in verse about a mother duck and father swan who bit his three ducklings to death as they quacked too much. The third essay changed Mr Keesing's behaviour towards Anne and he did not punish her thereafter. Anne's intelligence and sense of humour helped her to escape punishment for her loquacious (talkative) nature. Anne's erudite (intelligent and humorous) essays made Mr Keesing realize that she was an intelligent girl and he ceased (stopped) his punishment to curb her talkative nature.

Why is writing in a diary a strange experience for Anne?

Writing in a diary was a strange experience for Anne as she had never written anything before and she felt that no one would be interested in the musings of a thirteen-year old girl. She wanted to make the diary as her confidant to share her hopes, dreams, desires and disappointments.

Why does Anne want to keep a diary?

Anne wants to keep a diary as she has no close friend and confidant. She was also not very close to her sister Margot or mother. She feels isolated from the female family members during her journey into adolescence. She felt a great need to write about her desires, disappointments, dreams and hopes. She also hoped that the diary would help her get out of her depression and boredom and provide her comfort.

Why did Anne think that she could confide more in her diary than in the people?

Anne did not have a friend with whom she could share her feelings. Although she had many friends and spent good time with her friends yet she was unable to share her views and thoughts with them. When she got her diary, she named it Kitty and decided to share everything with it because she thought that no one would be interested in her musings and neither would she allow anyone to read her diary. She treated her diary as her best friend as she felt that paper has more patience than people.

Describe Anne's relationship with her grandmother.

At the tender age of four, Anne stayed back in Aachen with her grandmother once her parents emigrated to Holland. Hence, Anne loved her immensely and shared a close bond with her. In the summer of 1941, her grandmother had to be operated upon and thus Anne did not celebrate her birthday that year. Anne missed and remembered her grandmother after her demise (death) in 1942. On her birthday, she lit a candle in the memory of her grandmother.

Discuss that Anne was an intelligent girl in 100 -150 words.

Anne's academic brilliance can be seen/gauged from the fact that she was not perturbed (worried) about her promotion to the next class while the entire class was quaking in its boots. Her diary too is a testimony to her high intelligence as it provides an intimate account of hardship of daily life endured by the Jews under the Nazi occupation from a child's point of view. It is one of the few surviving authentic account of the time and provides rare and invaluable insight into the suffering of the Jews. Her inventiveness in writing her punishment essays which were amusing and brilliant, portray her intelligence (Add answer of her punishment by Mr Keesing)

What idea do you form of Mr. Keesing as a teacher? What is that you like most about him?

The Maths teacher Mr. Keesing was a good natured, disciplinarian and a concerned teacher who wanted students to be serious and concentrate in class while he was teaching. However, he was short-tempered with Anne and got annoyed with her as she talked too much during his class. He warned her several times but seeing no change in her behaviour, he assigned her

extra homework. When she completed one task, he assigned her one more essay. He found both the essays humorous as well as logical which made him laugh at her arguments. This incident portrays his change in attitude towards Anne. The third time he gave her a ridiculous topic Quack Quack Quack said Mistress Chatterbox. The verse poem written by Anne with Sanne's assistance (help) transformed the 'old fogey' Mr. Keesing completely. He became tolerant of Anne's talkativeness and did not assign her extra work as punishment. He also read out the poem in other classes as well along with his comments. He did not take umbrage (get angry) on the verse poem written by Anne which shows that he forgave his students' mischiefs.

'Paper has more patience than people'. Elucidate in 40 to 50 words

Anne had a great need to lighten the burden of her heart as she was completely alone in the world despite having a loving family and almost thirty people whom she could call as friends. She felt that people were not interested in listening to other people's problems. She missed having a true friend and felt that her diary Kitty would act as her confidant to contain (keep) her musings and help her to freely express her thoughts.

Why does Anne provide a brief sketch of her life?

Anne provides a brief sketch of her life as she felt to begin the story of her life from adolescence would be abrupt. As it was the story of her life so she writes about the people she cared for such as her dead grandmother.

What tells you that Anne loved her grandmother?

Anne developed a close bond with her grandmother while she stayed with her for a year.

BACKGROUND (General Info)

On 12th June 1942, a young Jewish girl named Anne Frank receives a diary for her 13th birthday. In her early diary entries, Anne explains that though she has many friends and acquaintances, she feels that she does not have one person to whom she can really open up. She regrets her inability to share her true self with her friends or family. Anne's perpetual feeling of being lonely and misunderstood provides the impetus for her dedicated diary

writing. Anne expresses gratitude that the diary can act as a confidant with whom she can share her innermost thoughts.

2. Under the Nazi rule, Jews were segregated from the Christians and had to wear the Star of David. Anne and her sister Margot went to a separate school for the Jewish children. Due to this persecution, her father moved to Amsterdam.

3. There was a constant fear of being discovered while the Franks were in hiding. Friends or close family could also not be trusted as anyone could betray them to the German police. They had to be secretive as they could not differentiate between friends or foes. Anne died a few months before the liberation of Germany, by the Allied Forces, in the camp at Bergen Belsen where she was held after their hiding place was raided by the Nazi Secret Police.

4. Her Diary has become an authentic historical record of the persecution of Jews by Nazis, the ill-effects of Germany's policies towards the Jews and the hardships faced by them.

AMANDA

ROBIN KLEIN

- The poem depicts the state of the little girl's mind who is constantly instructed about dos and don'ts by her elders in an unfriendly tone. Her mother only points out her faults and she is not praised for her good values. No doubt, it is the responsibility of the mother to instil good values in a child but not at the cost of her child's happiness. Nagging and yelling at children only makes matters worse.
- Amanda is a school going girl and has typical traits of a child like biting her nails, hunching her shoulders and slouching and loves eating chocolates. She is forbidden to do many things she enjoys, continuously under surveillance and compelled to lead a regimented, restricted day to day existence. Life is suffocating for her as she loses the innocence of childhood, independence and her creative expression. As decisions are forced on her hence this makes her not understand the value of advice given by her parents as it is given

without love and caring nurture. Her parents view society's social graces to be more important than her creativity and expression.

- When her mother is instructing her not to do one thing or the other, she is lost in the world of her dreams. But all the time, the little girl Amanda keeps dreaming of a life of freedom in the open. She dreams of mermaids in the sea, of roaming barefoot in dusty streets and live a life of peace like the golden-haired Rapunzel who lived alone in a high tower. She uses her imagination to escape from the day to day commands of her parents and this imaginary world is her defence against the real world which denies her freedom and expression.
- She takes no note of what is being said to her by her mother as she feels suffocated in the real world and finds peace in a world she has created where there are no constraints.
- A mermaid is a symbol of wonder and freedom for Amanda and escape from the world. She wishes to drift blissfully on a dreamy emerald sea without anyone accompanying her.
- She wants to enjoy the carefree life of an orphan and make designs on soft dust with her bare feet. She wants to be an orphan as she is frustrated at her mother's harsh words.
- She has no shoes on her feet and she is getting her feet dirtier in her imagination.
- As Rapunzel she wants to lock herself in the peaceful tower and never let down her hair to let anyone in.
- Her love for silence is a result of the shouting and yelling by the parents.
- She wants to become a mermaid, then an orphan and finally Rapunzel which portrays her progressive disconnect from the real world.
- Amanda's parents are upset over her careless behaviour and casualness but it is the lack of freedom, feeling of being trapped in the reality of life that makes Amanda moody and uninterested in the real world.
- The few points raised in the poem are that (a) each child is special and parents need to be patient and exhibit love towards children to make the children understand the rules set by them. (b) Parents need to give space to children for their growth as they learn lessons of life through their experiences as well. (c) Children pick up undesirable habits like

biting nails, slouching etc but this needs to be tackled by the parents in a friendly manner and children take time to unlearn the undesirable habits. (d) Children are under an invisible societal pressure to be presentable, have a certain physical appearance and to follow social etiquettes. Escapism will not solve these problems. (e) Upbringing of a child leads to personality development and poor upbringing can spoil the personality. (f) Upbringing is not just to be civilized and good mannered. It involves love, care and nurturing of a child. (Support with examples from the poem)

- Poetic Devices

Alliteration-

Stop that slouching and sit up straight

Stop that sulking

I thought I told you to clean your shoes

- Metaphor

Languid, emerald sea

Silence is golden

Freedom is sweet

THE HUNDRED DRESSES

RECAPITULATION POINTS

- Wanda is an extremely shy classmate with an unpronounceable name and of Polish origin.
- Wanda becomes invisible for other classmates once she sits in the last row. Miss Mason allows Wanda to continue sitting with the rough boys which sets her apart from the rest of the girls. They ignore her presence in the classroom and do not interact with her.
- Her Polish name and her address on Boggins Heights, the poor part of town, also adds to her being shunned by the girls. She wears the same ill-fitting blue dress every day. Even though it is clean but it looked as though it had never been ironed properly.
- The last row of the class is a symbol of neglect.

- The children conveniently forget about her during the school hours. Wanda does not fit in with this set of children. The only time they think about Wanda is outside of school hours.
- A dress is a symbol of happiness. All girls wear pretty dresses of bright colours and fancy designs. For Wanda imagination is the only way to reach happiness. She draws hundred different beautiful dresses in order to feel happy.
- Themes of friendship, forgiveness, bullying, unintentional cruelty are portrayed by the author.
- Maddie pitied the girl but didn't try to stand up for Wanda as she was scared that the teasing might transfer on to her.
- Wanda felt humiliated, harassed, bullied and embarrassed by the teasing. It all started with the faded blue dress she wears everyday as this is the only dress she has. Peggy & Madeline didn't know that Wanda's lies were a result of her panic and embarrassment.
- The schoolyard is the place where the students play but for Wanda it is a place where the girls relentlessly (without stopping) tease her.
- In the end, they all learn that painful moments do come in life but we have to learn lessons from these painful experiences to emerge as better human beings. Wanda has to learn that lying does not help her reputation. Peggy & Maddie learn that acceptance, kindness and empathy have to be practiced by them because they don't know what problems other children are going through outside the classroom.
- The classmates initially did not respect Wanda but she earns their respect when she wins the drawing and colouring contest.
- The Petronskis move to the city as they are made fun of because of their race and shunned for their poverty.

What impression do you form of Wanda Petronski on the basis of your reading of the lesson "The Hundred Dresses"?

Wanda is the owner of the hundred dresses in the story's title. She is of Polish heritage and has a name most people struggle to pronounce. She belongs to a poor family and lives in the poor area of town with her brother and father which leads to her being friendless in school. It is because of her peculiar name and poverty that she becomes the object of ridicule and

neglect. Being a quiet child who rarely says anything and never laughs, she is generally ignored by the teachers and the students and relegated (pushed) to the last seat in the last row of her classroom among the troublemakers. Wanda is teased not because she wears the same dress to school every day but because she claims to have one hundred dresses at home of different materials and colours and sixty pairs of shoes. This is her defence mechanism against the bullying as she cannot take on all the girls who bully and torment her. Even though she was aggrieved and disturbed by their teasing yet she never replies back angrily or fought with them. In fact, she displays a tremendous capacity for forgiveness as she extends friendship towards Peggy & Madeline after she moves to the big city. Wanda is an incredibly talented artist and designer which wins her the contest at school and which proves her superiority among her peers.

What impression do you form of Peggy on the basis of your reading of the lesson “The Hundred Dresses”?

Peggy, the most popular girl in school, belongs to the privileged (rich) class. She is pretty and talented which makes her confident of winning the drawing contest. Although she is the instigator (one who begins) of the teasing, she is not really a mean girl, nor considered by others to be a bully. In fact, she does not consider this teasing as cruelty towards Wanda. Peggy makes no efforts to integrate (merge or join) Wanda to the class which makes her a prime target of bullying. From Peggy's perspective, she is teasing Wanda for her silly lie of having one hundred dresses at home while she wears the same blue dress to school every day. After the children see Wanda's drawings, Peggy is gracious to concede that Wanda is far more talented than her. Peggy feels rather guilty about Wanda leaving the school and is worried that her teasing has driven Wanda away yet she makes up excuses for her behaviour in order to ease her conscience. Peggy & Maddie soon realise that their teasing has had serious implication on Petronski family life and happiness. Peggy learns an important lesson about not teasing people and that she has to take responsibility for her actions.

What impression do you form of Madeline on the basis of your reading of the lesson “The Hundred Dresses”? OR

Discuss the evolution of Maddie's character in the story?

Madeline is Peggy's best friend and also teases Wanda but knows in her heart this is wrong. She is not quite as popular as Peggy and she is reluctant to speak up for Wanda that teasing is unkind as she can't make herself conspicuous (expose or make visible) by acting to stop an injustice. Hence, she lets Wanda to be the target of the bullying. Madeline is also quite poor but not as poor as Wanda and wears Peggy's hand me downs which her mother alters or embellishes with trimmings and ribbons so that nobody at school remembers seeing them before. It is this fact that makes her reluctant to fight for Wanda as she thinks that the class may consider her as the next target as she too is poor. Maddie was unable to apologise in person to Wanda and remorse (guilt or deep regret) nagged her conscience. Maddie knows that she should have stood up to her friends and defended Wanda. Maddie becomes a stronger person by the end of the story as she makes up her mind to support anyone who is being teased and not be a part of the group which teases. Even though this realization comes late, but this shows Maddie's personal growth as a warm human being.

Q1. What was written in Mr. Petronski's letter?

Mr Jan Petronski wrote in his letter to Miss Mason that Jake and Wanda won't be attending school as their family was moving to the big city. The siblings won't be teased for their name and ethnicity in the new place as many Polish people lived in the city. The school children thought the siblings' surname Petronski to be funny and they teased Wanda and Jake by calling them 'Pollacks' as they belonged to Poland.

Q2. How did Maddie feel after listening to Wanda's father?

Maddie was sad and upset after listening to Mr Petronski's letter read out by Miss Mason. She blamed herself for being silent, cowardly and not oppose Peggy who teased Wanda incessantly even when she knew that this was a wrong act. She thought that she would repent for her behaviour by meeting Wanda.

Q3. What does Maddie decide to do after hearing the letter?

Maddie blames herself for not stopping Peggy from teasing Wanda. She decided to go to Wanda's house to meet and tell her that she had won the contest and they all felt that she was smart and her drawings of the hundred

dresses were beautiful. She also hoped that Peggy would accompany her and that Wanda had not yet moved to the city.

Q4. What excuses does Peggy think up for her behaviour towards Wanda after visiting her home?

Peggy suffers from guilt and tries to play down reasons for Wanda's shift to the city and expresses her helplessness in this matter. She consoles herself by saying that she never called Wanda a foreigner or made fun of her name. She thought Wanda to be too dumb to know that they were teasing her. She also defends herself by telling Maddie that it was her questioning that gave ideas to Wanda to make the beautiful dresses, which helped Wanda to win the contest.

Q5. What are Maddie's thoughts as they go to Boggins Heights?

Maddie hopes that Wanda's family had not yet moved to the city. She feels sorry for her behaviour and decides to request Wanda not to shift to the city. She wanted to tell Wanda that she is the winner of the contest and her drawings of the hundred dresses are beautiful. She wants to assure Wanda that everyone would be nice to her and she won't face teasing from anyone henceforth.

Q6. Why does Wanda's house remind Maddie of Wanda's blue dress?

Wanda's house is a small white house which looks shabby but is clean. The house reminds Maddie of Wanda's own dress which is faded blue, shabby yet clean. The blue dress and the house portray that the Petronskis may be poor but had self-respect.

Q7. What important decision does Maddie take at the end of the story?

Maddie's mind is obsessed with Wanda and her hundred dresses. After a long time, she takes an important decision that she will oppose if anyone tries to tease someone because of their looks or strange names. She decides not to support Peggy any further in teasing other children. She would not feel any regret even if she loses Peggy's friendship when she supports the teased person.

Q8. What did Peggy and Maddie write to Wanda?

Peggy and Maddie wrote a friendly letter to Wanda. They wrote that she had won the drawing contest and her drawings were very beautiful. They asked her about her new home and whether she liked the teacher at the new school. They wanted to write an apology letter but ended up writing a friendly letter.

Q7. How did the girls know that Wanda liked them even though they had teased her?

Wanda, in her letter, wished that one of her drawings of green dress be given to Peggy and blue one to Maddie. Maddie also showed to Peggy that Wanda had painted their heads and faces. Peggy points out to Madeline that Wanda must have really liked them. Peggy forgot that she was the one who constantly teased Wanda by asking embarrassing questions.

Q8. Why do you think Wanda's family moved to a different city?

The Petronskis moved from Boggins Heights to a different city because Mr. Petronski felt that his children Wanda and Jake were being teased for having a funny name and called Pollacks. They moved to a big city where no one made fun of people having unpronounceable names as there were many people with 'funny' names in the big city. This shows his deep love for his children and that he would do anything to protect them from being bullied and tormented.

Q9. Why did Madeline think that her silence was as bad as Peggy's teasing?

Maddie stood silently while Peggy teased Wanda by asking embarrassing questions about her claim of possessing a hundred dresses. She didn't oppose Peggy nor showed the courage to speak against her. Madeline felt that she should not have stood silently but should have stopped Peggy from teasing Wanda. That's why she considers her silence as bad as Peggy's teasing.

Q10. What important decision did Maddie make? Why did she have to think hard to do so?

Maddie felt guilty that she never stood up and stopped Peggy from teasing Wanda where as she should have done so. She made an important decision that she would oppose even Peggy if she tried to insult or make fun of

anyone. Since Peggy was her closest friend, it was hard for Maddie to think differently from her or oppose her.

Q11. Why did Peggy and Maddie notice Wanda's absence on Wednesday?

Peggy and Maddie noticed her absence on Wednesday because they had got late for school while waiting for Wanda so that they could tease her on the way to school. Her absence meant that there would be no teasing for that day.

Q12. Why was Wanda teased for her name?

The children of Room Thirteen felt that Wanda had a difficult and unpronounceable name hence they teased her. All other students had easy names except for Willie Bounce whom they felt had a funny name.

Q13. Given their teasing, how was Wanda able to still see Peggy & Madeline as her friends?

Wanda felt humiliated, harassed, bullied and embarrassed by the constant teasing by Peggy and Madeline. Wanda remained quiet during the teasing but her dull eyes and closed mouth concealed her deep pain. But the only time she got attention from the class students was during the dresses episode. Being a loving, friendly, simple and forgiving person she shows that she is a much nobler person than either Peggy & Maddie. She seems to have taken their teasing, in retrospect, as a sign of friendship rather than as something intentionally unkind even though she was hurt at that time.

Q14. Do you think Peggy meant to bully Wanda?

Peggy was a person who protected small children from bullies and cried for hours if an animal was mistreated. Peggy did not realize that she was being mean to Wanda; she actually thought that Wanda was telling lies and it was mere teasing on her part.

Q15. Did Wanda have many friends?

No, Wanda did not have any friends because she was the only one to stay in Boggins Heights. She came to school alone and went home alone. The

only time girls talked to her was when they teased her about the dresses. She sat alone in the last row of the class with the rough boys.

Q16. How was Maddie better than Wanda even though she too was poor?

Even though Maddie was poor but she was better than Wanda because she did not live in Boggins Heights and she did not have a funny name. Even though she wore Peggy's old dresses but her mother altered them by sewing new trimmings so that no one would recognise them as Peggy's clothes.

Q 17. Why did Maddie tear the letter that she had written for Peggy?

Madeline was terrified that if she stopped Peggy from teasing Wanda then the teasing might shift on to her. Either she may lose everyone's friendship or become the next target of everyone's teasing. She also felt that Peggy could never do anything wrong and that being Peggy's best friend she should not say anything as she might lose Peggy's friendship. Peggy's friendship provided a support and anchor to her which made her acceptable to the group. Maybe she also felt that the situation might take a turn for the worse, hence she felt it prudent to remain quiet. Just like Wanda did not escalate the situation by remaining quiet.

Q18. How did Wanda win the drawing competition? Did anyone expect her to win?

Wanda won the drawing contest as she had drawn hundred dresses of dazzling colours with brilliant lavish designs and each drawing was different yet exquisite. The judges thought that each entry was worthy of winning a prize. Everyone thought that Peggy would win the contest as she was the artist of the class. The students never expected Wanda to win as they had never bothered to interact with her except to tease her.

Q 19. Why was Maddie sure that Peggy would win the drawing contest?

Maddie was sure that Peggy would win the contest because Peggy was a better artist than any other student of the class. She could copy a picture from a magazine or draw a film star's head as good as the original.

Q 20. Why was Maddie sad after receiving Wanda's letter?

Maddie was sad on the way home because the letter confirmed that the Petronskis would never return to Boggins Heights and she would never meet

Wanda again. She would also not get a chance to make amends for her cowardly behaviour of being a mute spectator to the teasing.

Q21. Why do Peggy and Maddie think that Wanda won't reply to their letter?

When Maddie and Peggy did not receive a reply from Wanda for a long time they thought that she had not replied as she was hurt and angry at their incessant teasing.

Q22. Why do you think Wanda gave her winning drawings to Peggy and Maddie? Why were they surprised at this gesture?

Even though Peggy and the other girls humiliated and harassed Wanda, she had (harboured) no ill feelings towards them as Wanda was a nobler person and above petty jealousy. She desired that out of the hundred, two of her drawings may be given to Peggy and Maddie. Maddie and Peggy were surprised at this gesture of generosity by Wanda as this showed her forgiving nature and made them think of making amends for their insensitiveness towards others in future.

Q23. Do you think that Wanda really thought that the girls were teasing her? Why/ why not? What was her reaction towards them?

Wanda was a sensitive girl who was hurt by the constant teasing and hence she made up the story of possessing a hundred dresses even though she wore a single blue dress to school every day. Her hurt was reflected in her dull eyes, closed mouth and hitching of her left shoulder. This constant teasing was the main reason for the Petronski's move to the big city. Being a kind hearted and compassionate person she pardoned her tormentors. Her generosity led her to rise above envy and she showed her love towards them by offering all the dresses to the students. She also extended her friendship towards Peggy and Maddie by gifting the drawing of the green dress to Peggy and the blue one to Maddie.

Q 24. What did Miss Mason say after reading Mr. Petronski's letter?

Miss Mason tells the class that she hoped that Wanda's teasing about her long surname by the students was a thoughtless act which was not done purposely or deliberately to hurt Wanda's feelings. Miss Mason felt it to be a sad and unfortunate incident.

Q 25 Why was there no reply of the letter written to Wanda by the girls?

After their visit to Boggins Heights, Peggy and Maddie wrote a friendly letter to Wanda as an apology for their behaviour towards her and for hurting her feelings. But the girls did not receive any reply from Wanda which may have been because she did not receive the letter or she was busy settling down in the new place. We know that she is not an unpleasant or vengeful person who would not reply to their letter.

Q 26. What is the importance of courage in this lesson?

Courage is an important theme of the lesson as the girls cause (inflict) hurt to Wanda through their teasing and there are painful consequences for the bystanders who fail to act courageously against this act. Maddie lacks the courage to stop Peggy from playing this game day after day even though she does not approve of it. She learns the lesson that it is not good to be a mute spectator to teasing and bullying and resolves to become courageous and put an end to bullying.

Q 27. What do you think about Wanda's action of not coming to school anymore?

Wanda decided not to attend school any longer as she was friendless in school, relegated to the back benches and suffered merciless teasing from the rest of the students due to her Polish ethnicity (Polish origins) and poverty. Being a quiet and meek girl, she could not reply back or fight their teasing with equal ferocity (anger). Mr Petronski realized that the upbringing of his children was getting harmed due to the vicious (cruel) atmosphere in school. Hence, he decided to make a clean break and move to the big city which had many Polish people and would be more friendly to his children.

ANIMALS

WALT WHITMAN

Extra Info - Walt Whitman portrays the connection between man and nature in this poem. To Walt Whitman, the great American poet, animals are better than men. The poet finds some qualities in animals which men do not possess anymore. He expresses these by his poem "Animals". He says that he would be happy if he were an animal than a human and that he enjoys

the company of animals as humans can take on these qualities to become better.

Turn- Whitman is going on a new path when he says that animals are better than men. That is why he calls it a turn. He finds the civilized human world to be inferior to the world of animals. Hence, he wants to detach from humans and connect with animals and nature.

Placid contained - He says that animals are calm and self-contained. They are self-contained as they have no desires. Humans have become unhappy and discontented in the modern world.

I stand and look..... long - The more he observed animals, the more he recognised their special nature. He says that humans have lost the true meaning of life in this fast-paced life while animals still enjoy the true beauty of life and nature. Animals are down to earth and live by the order of nature.

Poetic device - Repetition- The word long.

They ... condition. Line 3 - Animals don't complain about anything. Animals do not express the emotions of fear, aggression, hate, anger, hypocrisy and unhappiness. The poet wants to remove selfishness, egoism and untrue behaviour from people's minds. The poet says that humans sweat as they have a guilty conscience because of their excessive greed.

Poetic Device - Anaphora- They do not.

Whine condition - Animals are happy with whatever they have. Unlike humans they do not criticise about what they already have. This is the reason that Whitman prefers animals.

The word "whine" means to complain. Whitman feels humans display childish behaviour by complaining over petty matters. Animals exhibit better behaviour compared to whining humans.

They....sins. Line 4 - The poet shows the true nature of man in this line. Humans lie awake at night because they have committed wrongs or misdeeds (sins) during the day. Humans commit sin and then cry for it at night. If humans were really religious, then they wouldn't commit any sin. Animals sleep peacefully at night as their conscience is clear.

They.....God. Line 5 - Animals are quite happy leading a simple life, they don't idle away their time discussing their duties to God like humans. Whitman seems to be upset with the religious figures of authority as they use religion to control men. Whitman uses animals to give his vision of world which is without religion.

Not... Things. Line 6 - He says that the humans have lost their sanity and have become uncontrollable in their greed to accumulate material possessions. Humans are crooked and crazy for money as well as power which is the cause of wars. Animals kill for survival but humans kill for greed and power.

The word demented means unable to act clearly.
The word mania means obsession for something.

Not ...ago. Line 7 - God created humans and animals for dwelling on earth. God has placed man at a higher position than animals because humans can talk and have the ability to think and reason. But over the years humans have become beastly and the animals have turned divine. Unlike animals, we live in a society where social norms and people's opinions control us. Discrimination and social status have overpowered human freedom.

Not one kneels to another - People kneel in religious places or before kings and queens. Animals do not kneel before anyone.

Nor to his kind... years ago- Animals do not kneel even before any ancestor who lived thousands of years before. It may be a reference to God.

(Extra info- The poet has shown the negative aspects of the greatest accomplishments of civilization i.e. religion, material success and government. The words from the poem i.e. Sweaty and whining guilt, excessive greed and kneeling point towards this.)

Not one is....earth Line 8 - But the animals provide an alternative as they do not kneel before other animals and neither are they unhappy.

So they...accept them. Line 9 – The poet feels the life of a man is full of stress, depression, anxiety and unhappiness. So, he wants to turn away from living with other humans and wants to live in the company of animals because he believes that he will get real happiness among animals. He wishes to make a meaningful relationship with animals.

They....possession- Animals live in the present moment, they are self-contained, do not have any guilt that religion brings in case any mistake is committed, they are free of material possessions and free of the idea of unhappiness. The poet wants to achieve all these things and he feels attached or related to them and he accepts them with their tokens. He says that in the world of animals, all animals are equal.

The word **evince** means to show

Tokens - virtues and values that man possessed in abundance when he lived in nature. The tokens are of peace, contentment, simplicity, kindness, innocence etc. With the passage of time and advancement of civilization, man has abandoned these noble virtues and become selfish, greedy and materialistic. On the contrary, animals possess these virtues in plenty as they have picked them up when humans dropped them. The word “token” is a metaphor.

Did I pass... them, Line 11- Humans have lost their unity and close bond with nature and will become whole once these tokens are regained. These tokens were dropped in the quest to become civilized beings. Civilization has made human beings corrupt and greedy instead of making them noble.

Whitman has used the poetic device Anaphora in this poem. Anaphora is the repetition of certain set of words or phrases at the beginning of a sentence in order to emphasise something. The poem Animals is written in free verse, hence there is no rhyme scheme in this poem.

Glossary

Placid - calm

long and long- for a long time

weep - cry

whine- to complain

demented- The animals are not mad to collect things

mania - (here) enthusiasm for something

tokens - symbols

Negligently- carelessly

Mention three things that humans do and animals don't.

- ❖ Whine
- ❖ Commit sins
- ❖ Own material possessions
(I have given the points, you may please elaborate)

What three qualities do animals possess?

- ❖ Placid and self contained
- ❖ Lead a life of satisfaction and peace- no mania of possessing things
- ❖ Show equanimity in sorrow and happiness
(I have given the points, you may please elaborate)

Why has the poet called the desire to own things, a mania?

The poet uses words like demented and mania for the never-ending desire of man to own material possessions.

Why does Whitman feel that animals are better than men?

Walt Whitman feels that animals are better than men as they are calm and self-contained. They do not whine about their condition and neither do they weep at night for the sins they commit during the day. They are not dissatisfied and do not have the obsession to collect material things. The animals do not bow down before others of their kind and possess tokens like patience, innocence etc. Animals are also better as they follow the rules of nature.

A BAKER FROM GOA

LUCIO RODRIGUES

What are the elders in Goa nostalgic about?

The elders in Goa are nostalgic about the past when Goa was under the Portuguese rule. The Portuguese relished bread and transformed bread making into a specialised art. The Portuguese have left an indelible mark on the lives of the Goans. The Goans have accepted bread made by paders as their staple food.

When did the baker come every day? Why were the children excited and ran to meet him?

The baker in the traditional Goan village came twice a day. Once in the morning when he set out on his selling round and then when he returned after emptying his huge basket.

The children considered the baker to be their friend, companion and guide. They ran to meet him to buy the delicious bread bangles or sweet bread of special make which were especially made for children.

Is bread making still popular in Goa? How do you know?

Bread making is still popular in Goa as mixers, moulders, age old furnaces and bakers still exist in the state. Secondly, Goans eat bread every day and important occasions like Christmas, festivals, weddings and engagements are incomplete without bolinhas, cakes, bol and sandwiches. Bread and paders are an integral part of Goa life.

What is the baker called? How is he an important part of the life of a Goan village?

Bakers are known as *pader* in Goa. The baker is an important part of the life of a village in Goa. His bread and cakes are an essential part of the Goan life. His products bread, cakes, bols and bolinhas are needed for Christmas and important social occasions like weddings and engagements. Owing to this fact he is an affluent person.

What did the bakers wear in the Portuguese days and when the author was young?

When Goa was under the Portuguese rule, the baker wore a peculiar (special or unique) dress called the *Kabai*. The *Kabai* was a single piece long frock reaching down to the knees. During the time of the author's childhood the

baker's dress had changed. The bakers wore shirt and trousers which were shorter than the full-length ones and longer than half pants.

Why was the baker's furnace essential in a traditional Goan village?

The baker's furnace was essential in a traditional Goan village because without the baker's furnace bread, cakes, bolinhas, bols and sandwiches cannot be made. Marriage gifts were meaningless without the sweet bread called the bols. A daughter's engagement was incomplete without the customary sandwiches prepared by the lady of the house. For Christmas and other festivals, cakes and bolinhas were a must.

How could a baker be recognised in the days of the author's childhood?

A baker could be recognised by his peculiar dress(describe the dress). The jingling thud of his bamboo staff heralded (announced) his arrival in the morning.

What do we learn about the financial condition of bakers in Goa?

Baking was a profitable profession in Goa in the olden days. Even today the baker and his family never starve. They look happy and prosperous. They are still running their business profitably. Bread, bolinhas, cakes and bols are used for festivals and important occasions like marriages, engagements etc.

After reading the story "A Baker from Goa", do you think our traditions, heritage, values and practices are the roots that nourish us? Why/ Why not?

The story 'A baker from Goa' highlights the traditional practice of making bread which has been passed on from the Portuguese to the Goans. Bread and other baked products are an essential part of Goan life. Bread like bol is used for all social occasions like marriage and engagements and for their most important festival Christmas, cakes are consumed in large numbers.

History, culture as well as traditional values and practices are closely inter-linked. Bread is an integral part of their life as the Portuguese have left an indelible mark on Goan life. Bread making and bread makers are also a link with history which tells us of the time when Goa was under the Portuguese rule. The Goans have neither discarded the tradition and heritage of bread

making nor stopped eating bread. The furnaces, mixers and moulders are an evidence that bread making is still continuing in present day Goa.

Why does the author say that the children considered the baker to be their friend, companion and guide?

The author says that the children considered him to be their friend, companion and guide as the baker prepared special bread for them called the bread bangles and a type of sweet bread. He did not scold the children when they climbed on the parapet to look into his basket to choose bread bangles or sweet bread. As the baker baked the children's favourite bread hence, they considered him to be their friend. The children awakened with the thud and jingle of his bamboo staff and the aroma of the freshly baked bread made them eat the bread without even brushing their teeth.

COORG

LOKESH ABROL

- ❖ Coorg is situated mid-way between Mysore and Mangalore.
- ❖ Coorg is the smallest district of Karnataka.
- ❖ The ideal time to visit Coorg is from September to March.
- ❖ River Kaveri flows through the region and is full of Mahaseer fish.
- ❖ The first Chief of the Indian Army was General Cariappa who was a Coorgi.
- ❖ Another name of Coorg is Kodagu
- ❖ The nearest hills are Brahmagiri hills which provide a panoramic view of the misty landscape.
- ❖ The largest Tibetan settlement is in Bylakuppe.
- ❖ A crop which grows in abundance in Coorg is coffee.
- ❖ Evergreen rainforests. cover 30% of this district.
- ❖ Trekkers are drawn to Coorg for the numerous walking trails which have become their favourite.
- ❖ Nisargadhama is a sixty-four acre island which can be reached by a walk across the rope bridge after you climb Brahmagiri Hills.
- ❖ Coorg is famous for its scenic beauty, tranquil weather, spices, coffee plantations and lush evergreen forests.

- ❖ Coffee estates and colonial bungalows stand tucked under tree canopies in prime corners.
- ❖ The long coat with embroidered waist belt worn by the kodavus is known as the Kuppia.
- ❖ Coorgi homes have a tradition of hospitality.
- ❖ The Coorg Regiment is the one of the most decorated in the Indian Army.
- ❖ The five high energy sports to enjoy in Coorg are river rafting, canoeing, rappelling, rock climbing and mountain biking.
- ❖ The animals you can find in Coorg are Malabar squirrels, langurs and slender loris.
- ❖ Mention the two legends regarding Kudavu ancestry.
- ❖ The people of Coorg have a tradition of courage and bravery. How has this been recognized in modern India? (Regiment, First Chief, Carry firearms, martial traditions)
- ❖ Why is September to March, the best season to visit Coorg?
- ❖ Which special privilege has been granted to Kudavus by the Govt of India?

TEA FROM ASSAM

ARUP KUMAR DUTTA

RECAPITULATION POINTS

- Pranjol and Rajvir are classmates at a school in Delhi.
- Rajvir is a curious boy and loves to research information and can recall it. He also believes in taking first hand information. Puts the book that he is reading, down and looks at the scenery outside. He gets excited looking at the tea estate and this character trait about learning new things is revealed.
- Pranjol's father works as a manager at Dhekiabari Tea Estate.
- The popularity of tea as a beverage can be gauged from the fact that over eighty crore cups of tea are drunk everyday throughout the world.
- Both Pranjol and Rajvir like reading detective stories.

- Tea plantation workers are different from farm labourers as they wear plastic aprons and carry bamboo baskets on their backs while pruning newly sprouted tea leaves. It is a specialized job which requires skill to perform as only the tea buds are plucked to prepare tea leaves. Tea workers work only on one crop but the farm labourers have to work on multiple crops. Tea- pluckers remain very busy during the second flush or the sprouting season(May to July) which is a seasonal activity. The second flush yields the best tea. Farm labourers remain busy throughout the year tilling, weeding or harvesting the crop.
- Tea was first drunk in China. The words chai and chini are derived from the Chinese language.
- Tea came to Europe only in the sixteenth century and was drunk more as a medicine than as a beverage.
- The sight of the sea of tea bushes against the backdrop of densely wooded hills thrilled Rajvir. The tall sturdy shade-trees dwarfed the tea bushes and he could see acres upon acres of tea bushes pruned to the same height. Tea-pluckers with bamboo baskets and wearing plastic aprons were plucking the newly sprouted tea leaves.
- The sight of the tea garden with the lush green tea bushes excited Rajvir as he had never seen a tea garden earlier. Pranjol did not share his excitement as he was born and raised on Dhekiabari tea plantation where his father worked as a manager.
- I learn the two legends associated with the origin of tea.

MADAM RIDES THE BUS

Vallikkannan

- ❖ Eight years old Valli was curious about things. Valli's favourite pastime was to stand in the front doorway of her house and watch the happenings in the street outside. She liked doing this as she had no

playmates of her age in the neighbourhood and watching the street provided her with many new unusual experiences.

- ❖ The most fascinating thing for her was the bus that travelled between her village and the nearest town which was six miles away.
- ❖ It passed through the street every hour and the trip took forty five minutes.
- ❖ She picked up details of the bus journey by listening to the conversation between her neighbours and people who regularly travelled by the bus. She also asked a few discreet questions here and there.
- ❖ She needed sixty paise for the to and fro bus fare.
- ❖ She decided not to spend money on anything else apart from the bus fare. She did not get down from the bus as she did not have money to spend and she wanted to reach home before her mother got up from her afternoon nap.
- ❖ She did not ride the merry go round in the village fair to save the money.
- ❖ The view from the canal was a sight to behold. Even though the road was narrow, the canal ran along the road and beyond that were the palm trees, grassland, distant mountains which touched the blue sky. The other side had a deep ditch followed by acres and acres of green fields.
- ❖ She also resisted or killed her desire / temptation to buy peppermints, toys and balloons.
- ❖ She had two problems to surmount- how to slip unnoticed and how to collect the money for the bus fare.
- ❖ Her mother took an afternoon nap from one to four hence she used this time for her excursions. She stood looking from the doorway or she even ventured out into the village.
- ❖ The conductor called her madam as she was independent, rude with the fellow passengers and had a ready answer for every question.
- ❖ The conductor tempted her to alight from the bus by asking her to have a look at the sights of the town and to have a soft drink from the nearby stall.
- ❖ Valli was overcome with sadness once she sees that the cow had died within an hour.

What was Valli's favourite pastime? Why did she choose this pastime?

Valli's favourite pastime was to stand in the front doorway of her house and watch the happenings in the street outside. She liked doing this as she had no playmates of her age in the neighbourhood and had a curious nature.

What did Valli do from one to four p.m.?

Her mother took a nap from one to four hence she used this time for her excursions. She stood looking from the doorway or she even ventured out into the village.

What is Valli's most fascinating pastime? What is the source of unending joy for her? What was her strongest desire? Why did she choose this pastime?

Valli's fascinating pastime was to watch the bus travelling between her village and the nearest town. The bus passed through her street every hour on its to and fro journey. The sight of the bus filled each time with a new set of people was a source of unending joy for her. Her strongest desire was to take a ride on that bus.

She liked doing this as she had no playmates of her age in the neighbourhood. She enjoyed this pastime as it gave her many unusual experiences.

What does Valli find out about the bus journey?

Valli prepared to undertake her maiden (first time) bus journey by gathering information and details of the bus journey by listening to the conversation between her neighbours and people who regularly travelled by the bus. She needed sixty paise for the to and fro bus fare as the town was six miles away from her village and 45 minutes for the one way journey. She decided not to spend money on anything else apart from the bus fare. She also learnt that her journey would be complete by the time her mother got up from her afternoon nap. She need not inform her mother about her secret desire.

Why didn't Valli want to go to the stall and have a drink? What does it tell you about her?

(She will be left with no money for the return journey, Wise not to get tempted by strangers- may miss her bus)

Why does the conductor call her madam?

(Even though young, she behaved like a mature person, halted the bus in a commanding manner- Bought her own ticket, Declines his help to board the bus, answers all his questions, manages everything herself and is travelling unescorted by an adult- conductor teased her by calling her madam)

Why did Valli finally occupy her seat?

(the bus was empty- she was too excited- later on many people boarded the bus)

What did Valli see on the way which made her laugh?

Why did Valli not get off the bus before the return journey?

(not informed sleeping Mother - limited time)

How did Valli react when she saw the dead cow by the roadside?

(shocked and sad- sensitive girl- cow alive sometime ago and now dead- dampened her enthusiasm about her much awaited first bus ride)

Describe the bus.

Why did Valli refuse to look out of the bus on her way back?

Give examples to show that Valli was a good planner.

She did not ride the merry go round in the village fair to save the money.

She also resisted or killed her desire / temptation to buy peppermints, toys and balloons.

She had two problems to surmount (to overcome)- how to slip out unnoticed and how to collect the money for the bus fare. She realized that she can undertake the ride when her mother takes her nap.

She collected information about the bus trip and the time taken to travel.

Do you think that Valli did the right thing by not informing her mother? What evils could have befallen her? What should she have done?

Give a pen portrait of Valli.

(8 years old, bright and curious girl, favourite pastime- good planner- can keep secrets- good at gathering information, had a commanding attitude, if other children had experienced certain incidents which she had not, then she would shout proud, proud- she was sensitive and the cow incident saddened her, she realized that she is responsible for her actions and some evil may befall her just like the carefree cow suffered death for walking on a busy road- she could be frugal when needed as she did not succumb to temptations at the fair)

When would Valli shout 'proud proud'?

Describe the sights that she sees from the bus when it crosses the canal.

THE TALE OF CUSTARD THE DRAGON

OGDEN NASH

- ❖ Belinda is a little girl who lives in a little white house with a mouse, a kitten and a puppy.
- ❖ The dragon is called Custard because the pets think him to be a coward.
- ❖ In the poem, Custard simply longs for the safety of a cage.
- ❖ Ink the cat and Blink the mouse chase lions down the stairs and Mustard the dog is as brave as a lion in a rage.
- ❖ Belinda is as brave as a barrel full of bears.
- ❖ Yet when the pirate climbs the window with a pistol and a cutlass in his teeth, Belinda cried for help, Mustard fled with a terrified yelp, Ink hid itself in the bottom of the house and blink took refuge in a mousehole.
- ❖ Seeing the fearsome dragon, the pirate gapes and gulps (takes or drinks) some wine (grog) from his flagon(flask). He also fires two bullets to kill the dragon but they miss their mark or the dragon had a thick hide.
- ❖ Custard the dragon snorting like an engine defends his friends by eating (gobbled) him like a robin eats a worm.
- ❖ A celebration follows and all are elated. Belinda embraced him, Mustard licked him and Ink and Blink danced.
- ❖ The Cat, dog and the mouse insist that they are braver than the dragon. They could not believe that Custard could kill the pirate.
- ❖ Custard agrees with their suggestion and longs for the safe and comfortable cage.
- ❖ The poem tells us that strength of mind and self confidence makes a person brave. Outward appearance does not predict how one will behave during a crisis. Boastful people are aplenty in this world. Self-confidence is essential to earn respect among your peers.
- ❖ One must be conscious of one's strengths. Do not let others to bring your confidence down with their negative comments.

THE SERMON AT BENARAS

When was Buddha born?

Where did he preach his first sermon and why?

What did Buddha ask Kisa for?

Why was Gautam known as the Buddha?

Describe Buddha's life before enlightenment.

(HINT: Prince- Life of Luxury- encountered suffering and grief- made him sad sorrowful-renounced the world- search for eternal truth and meaning of life-wandered-sat under fig tree- vowed not to leave until enlightened).

What should a person do to seek peace?

In order to attain peace, one should draw out the arrow of lamentation or sorrow, complaint and grief. Once this arrow is out, one becomes composed and obtains peace of mind. A blessed person is one who has removed sorrow from his mind.

Why do the wise not grieve?(OR Who are wise people as per Buddha?)

The wise do not grieve because they know that nobody can escape death.

How did Kisa realise that life and death is a normal process?

Kisa Gotami realized that life and death is a normal process when she found no house where some loved one had not died. She learnt the lesson that the living are few but the dead are many. Kisa learnt the reality of life that death for mortals is inevitable.

Why was Kisa Gotami in grief?

Kisa was in grief as her only son had died. She could not accept his death so she wandered among her neighbour's houses asking them for medicine to cure her child. Her grief prevents her from facing the reality that her son is dead.

Why did Kisa go from house to house?

On Buddha's advice, Kisa went from house to house as she wanted mustard seeds from a house where death had not visited to revive her dead son. She did not get mustard seeds from such a house to cure her son as death had visited every house.

Why did Kisa go a second time from house to house after speaking to Lord Buddha? Does she succeed in getting what she wanted?

Kisa is told by Lord Buddha that he will be able to revive her son only if she gets mustard seeds from a house where no death of any loved one or friend has taken place. So Kisa once again goes from house to house to procure the mustard seeds. She does not get the mustard seeds because there is no house where death had not visited.

When she sees the flickering lights of the city, she realizes that a man's life is also like the light from a lamp. Just like the lamp gives light, a man lives; when light from the lamp goes out, a man dies.

What lesson about pain and suffering did Buddha want Kisa Gotami to understand?

Buddha wanted Kisa to understand that a person cannot obtain peace of mind by grieving and that death is a universal phenomenon which cannot be escaped. A person who does not complain and cry for the dead will receive peace of mind. A person is blessed when he has peace of mind. A person who has overcome sorrow and grief will be blessed and have peace of mind.

What truth of life lesson about death did Buddha teach Kisa?

Buddha said that life of mortals or humans is troubled, short and combined with pain. Humans cannot avoid death. Young or old, wise or fool, all have to die. He reinforced his lesson by giving the example of ripe fruit and earthen vessels. Just as ripe fruits fall from the tree or the earthen vessels made by potters break, similarly humans cannot escape death. Thus, Buddha taught her the truth of life.

What did Buddha do after he attained enlightenment?

After attaining enlightenment Buddha began to teach and share his new understanding about life and its lessons. He taught that death is a universal truth and to obtain peace and overcome sorrow, a person should not complain or cry. Secondly, a person should leave selfishness and grief.

Why should one not grieve or cry at the death of a loved one?

One should not grieve or cry after death of a loved one as a person will not obtain peace of mind. Crying will increase his pain and the body will suffer. The person will become sick and pale but his crying will not bring the dead to come alive. To seek peace and overcome sorrow, a person should not complain or cry. One should learn equanimity.

What lesson on death, sorrow and suffering did Buddha teach Gotami in the chapter, ' The Sermon at Benaras'?

Kisa Gotami took her son to Buddha to bring him back to life. Gotami was looking for a miracle but was saddened and in extreme grief once she realised that she could not obtain mustard seeds from a house where no death had taken place.

Buddha taught Gotami that death and suffering are part and parcel of life. Death and suffering cannot be avoided in one's life as humans are mortal. Whoever has come into this world has to die. One should remain calm and composed when a loved one dies and should not be overcome with grief. Excessive grief will exacerbate the pain of separation from the loved one. Wise people do not complain or lament their loss or try to bring back their loved ones to life as Gotami wished for her son. The wise accept death as the ultimate truth and overcome their sorrow. People who overcome their sorrow will be blessed. Pain, suffering and death should not cause us distress if we wish to obtain peace of mind.

THE PROPOSAL

ANTON CHEKOV

RECAPITULATION POINTS

- ❖ Lomov pays Chubukov a visit in formal evening dress.
- ❖ Chubukov suspects that his neighbour Lomov has come to borrow money. Chubukov had assisted Lomov earlier whenever he had asked Chubukov for help.
- ❖ Lomov hesitantly informs Chubukov that he intends to marry his 25-year old daughter Natalya Stepanovna. Lomov is not sure whether Chubukov's would agree or decline his request.
- ❖ Chubukov is overjoyed when he hears Lomov's proposal as he had secretly hoped and desired Natalya to marry Lomov and he considered Lomov like a son. He is so happy that he embraces and kisses Lomov. He reveals to Lomov that Natalya too loves him. Once Natalya marries Lomov, then their lands will increase as their estates are adjacent to each other which tells us about the importance of land among the rich in the Russian society. Secondly, economic issues were more important than love.
- ❖ Lomov's reasons to marry Natalya are that she is an excellent housekeeper, not bad looking, well-educated and at 35 years of age he ought to lead a quiet and regular life. He can't wait for real love, else he will never marry.
- ❖ Lomov and Chubukov had friendly and cordial neighbourly relations as Chubukov had lent Lomov his threshing machine and also help each other financially from time to time. Even their ancestors had helped each other.
- ❖ Lomov had inherited the land from his late aunt and her husband.
- ❖ Oxen Meadows Dispute
 - ✚ The land was once the subject of dispute but now belonged to him.
 - ✚ Lomov's aunt's grandmother had given the free use of the meadows to Chubukov's grandfather's peasants.
 - ✚ In return, the peasants had to make bricks for her.
 - ✚ The peasants had used the meadows for forty years and hence regarded the property as their own.
 - ✚ Natalya felt that her grandfather and great grandfather believed that their estate extended up to Burnt Marsh which included the area of Oxen Meadows.

- ✚ The cost of Oxen Meadows land is just 300 Roubles which is not much but both of them are stubborn and refuse to reach a compromise and call it unfairness that the other is unyielding. They both stick to their versions about ownership of Oxen Meadows.
- ✚ They both say that they will make a present of the land to each other but still continue the fight.
- ✚ In the meantime, Chubukov enters the room and joins the fight rather than resolving the matter. He is even willing to give the land to the peasants but not to Lomov to resolve the issue.
- ✚ They call each other names like pettifogger and land grabber and also include the dead ancestors and relatives in their name calling.
- ✚ Lomov leaves the house . Finally, Natalya agrees that Oxen Meadows belonged to Lomov.

❖ Once Chubukov informs Natalya that Lomov had come to ask for her hand in marriage, she asks her father to call Lomov back to the house as she too wants to marry him.

❖ Both Natalya and Chubukov blame each other for driving Lomov out of the house. She wants to accept his marriage proposal.

❖ Once Lomov returns, Natalya agrees that Oxen Meadows belonged to Lomov and tries to change the topic of conversation to hunting. Chubukov leaves them to talk about the proposal. Instead of proposing to Natalya, Lomov begins to talk about his pet dog Guess getting lame.

❖ Dog Dispute

- ✚ Lomov says that he had paid 125 roubles to buy his dog Guess
- ✚ Natalya tells him that Lomov had paid excess money as Chubukov had bought a better dog after paying 85 roubles.
- ✚ **Lomov begins the fight on a petty reason that their dog Squeezer is overshot and overshot dogs make bad hunters.**
- ✚ Natalya retorts by saying that Squeezer is a young pedigree dog unlike Guess which is old and without any pedigree.
- ✚ Chubukov jumps into the fight by saying that even though Guess is a pedigree dog but he is old and short in the muzzle.

- ❖ Slowly the fight between Lomov and Chubukov shifts from their dog's shortcomings to hunting. Chubukov tells Lomov that he is not a good hunter and Lomov retorts by saying that Chubukov goes for a hunt only to intrigue with the Count.
- ❖ Chubukov then accuses Lomov to be under the slipper of his house keeper.
- ❖ In the meantime, Lomov faints and Natalya thinks that he has died.
- ❖ Luckily, Lomov moves and Chubukov tells them to marry one another before they begin another fight. He calls for celebrations by asking for champagne.
- ❖ Both Natalya and Lomov are stubborn, short tempered, argumentative, have a tendency to call names and quarrel over trivial matters. Natalya is very proud of the fact that she belongs to the landed class and her family has been rich for generations.

Describe the first fight between Natalya and Lomov.

Lomov had visited Natalya to propose to her but rather than come to the point he digressed from his purpose and started talking about his aunt and his inheritance, his respect for her parents and the Oxen Meadows. He also mentioned how his property Oxen Meadows touched their part of land at birchwood and their lands had a common boundary. On hearing the name of Oxen Meadows, Natalya argued that Oxen Meadows belonged to them but Lomov was insistent that the meadows were his. He also tries to remind her that the said property was given by his aunt's grandmother to Chubukov's grandfather in exchange for making bricks for Lomov's aunt. The peasants of Natalya's great grandfather had used the meadows for forty years and started thinking of the land as their own. They both also talk of giving the oxen meadows as a present to each other as its worth is just 300 roubles yet their fight did not cease at this point. While they were thus fighting, Chubukov too joins the heated discussion and they start calling each other names like land grabber and threaten to take the matter to court. Finally, Lomov leaves their house and Natalya too agrees that Oxen Meadows belonged to Lomov. The fight over a trivial matter which could have been solved amicably takes a turn for the worse because of their stubborn attitude.

Give two reasons that Lomov gives for his marriage at the earliest?

(35, to lead a quiet and regular life)

How does the argument about Oxen Meadows begin?

How did Lomov get his inheritance?

Why does Chubukov suspect Lomov when the latter pays him a visit? What was the real purpose of Lomov's visit?

Describe the dispute between Natalya and Lomov over dogs?

Why was Natalya surprised to see Lomov? Does she know the true purpose of his visit?

Why does Lomov want to marry Natalya?

(Lomov and Chubukov families know each other, She is an excellent housekeeper, well-educated and not bad looking. He knows he is 35 and will not get married if he waits for real love)

How does Chubukov react when Lomov told him that he had come to propose to his daughter?

(glad- embraced and kissed Lomov, -even sheds a tear- tells Lomov that he loves him as a son, It was his secret desire that Natalya married Lomov)

On what issues do Natalya and Lomov quarrel? What does the quarrel reveal about them?

(Short tempered, not willing to hear the other person out, talkative, quarrel over petty issues, argumentative)

Why was Natalya wearing an apron when she meets Lomov?

- ❖ Even though rich, likes to help the servants, personally supervises hay cutting, involves herself in all tasks.

Why does Natalya tell her father to call Lomov back?

If Natalya is really love sick, then why did she fight with Lomov?

- ❖ Even though she loves Lomov and wants to marry him, yet her talkative and argumentative personality over shadowed her love for Lomov. Argumentative people consider their view to be correct at all times. Love and consideration for others takes a back seat when they argue.